By the King.

A Proclamation inhibiting the Importation of Pepper from forraine parts, by any other persons then those of the *East Indian* Company.

FOrasmuch as it is not vnknowen, That in former times when all or the greatest part of Pepper, and other Spices of the growth of the East Indies, was brought into this our Realme of England and Principalitie of Wales by Strangers onely, the same was then sold at very high Rates, vntill such time as some of our owne Merchants did themselues trade into those parts, and bringing in good quantities of those Commodities, did sell the same at much lower prices, to the great reliefe and benefit of all our Subiects in generall: And forasmuch as We doe finde, That the establishment and continuance of this Trade, hath and will be more and more an occasion to imploy and encrease the great Shipping of this Kingdome, which hath heretofore bene out of vse, as being not so necessary for Trade in Countreys that are not so farre remote: For these, and some other reasons which haue bene deliuered vnto vs, being desirous to encourage this Company, and to maintaine that Trade by all good and lawfull meanes; And experience teaching vs, That if there should be, till the Trade were better setled, a free and generall libertie for all persons Whatsoeuer to bring in those Commodities, it would be an occasion to ouerlay the Trade, and Strangers would of purpose vent their Spices at small Rates, thereby to enforce our owne Subiects to desist from trading into those Countreis: Wee with the aduise of our Priuie Councell, haue thought fit, for some time to restraine the Importation of Pepper from forraine parts, by any others then by the Merchants ioyntly of the East Indian Company. And therefore Wee doe hereby Will and commaund all person and persons whatsoeuer, either our naturall borne Subiects, Denizens, or Strangers (not being the Company aforesaid) to forbeare to bring into these our Dominions of England and Wales, any Pepper, directly or indirectly, vpon paine of forfeiture of the goods, and What other punishment they may incurre by any contempt and default herein. And to the end, this our pleasure may be more duely obserued, Wee doe likewise charge and command all Customers, Comptrollers, Searchers, Waiters, Farmours of our Customes and their Deputies, and all other our Officers of the Ports, within our Territories aforesaid, That they doe not giue any Bills of Entrie for Pepper that is brought in from forraine Countreis, by any other then those Who shall be knowen to bee of the Company aforesaid: Neither shall they suffer it to bee landed, or being so, shall seize the same to our vse as iustly forfaited. And moreouer, they and euery of them, shall vse their best meanes and endeuours to hinder and preuent all secret and fraudulent practizes of such as shall seeke to bring it that Commoditie, Notwithstanding this our pleasure published to the contrary.

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AND becauſe we are careful to preuent al inconueniences to the generality of our Subiects, in caſe they ſhould be hardly dealt with vnder this reſtraint, by thoſe that haue the whole maſſe of Pepper in their owne hands; Although wee hold the Company to be compounded of many good and honeſt Merchants and others, yet becauſe there is no Societie wherein all are of one temper, And out of the care we haue alwayes had for the common good of all our people more then of any particuler Societie; wee thought it not ſafe to repoſe ſo much confidence in a part of our people, as to leaue the whole Body ſubiect to their Wills, in matter of this nature.

And therefore hauing well examined what might be an indifferent price to yeeld to the Merchants competent gaine for the maintenance of ſo great and long a Trade, and ſo needfull for the ſupport of Nauigation, and yet not be ouerchargeable to the reſt of our people, who haue on the other ſide dayly vſe of that kinde of Spice; We haue conditioned with them, and limitted, That they ſhall vtter Pepper at the rate of Two ſhillings ſixe pence the pound, and not exceed, to any that ſhall come or ſend for it, vpon paine of our high diſpleaſure.

Which prouiſion, and limitation being made by vs in fauour of the communitie of our Subiects, we haue thought good to publiſh and make knowen to all men, To the end that if it fall out, that ſuch as by Way of Retaile doe vtter to our people dwelling in places remote from our Citie of London, and other parts where Shipping doeth ariue, that kinde of Spice, there bee exacted any prices exceſſiue, it may appeare that the ſame is not for want of due prouiſion made to preuent it, but by the ouergreedineſſe of thoſe which ſhall ſell it. In which conſideration, although wee know, that there are many reaſons, why thoſe that ſell by Retaile, ſhould demaund a further price then they pay for it here, as well in reſpect of the diſtance of place, forbearing of their money, as many other things incident to that kinde of Trade: Yet the better to containe them within the bounds of reaſonable gaine, we haue thought good to make knowen thus much, thereby to expreſſe our owne care of our louing Subiects, and to ſhew them the meanes whereby they may auoyd ſuch further burden, as may bee caſt vpon them by any that ſhall goe about by any vndue practiſe, to raiſe immoderate gaine, vnder colour or pretext of that courſe which we haue taken for the reaſons aforeſaid.

Giuen at Newmarket the laſt day of Nouember, in the ſeuenth yeere of our Reigne of Great Britaine, France and Freland.

God ſaue the King.

¶ Imprinted at London by Robert Barker,
Printer to the Kings moſt Excellent Maieſtie.
ANNO 1609.

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